

## Undergrad play "The Illusion" premieres April 2

### Lose yourself in a play that has no time nor space

By Laura Long  
STAFF WRITER

Sorcery, sword fighting and romance. Three good reasons to see the undergraduate production of "The Illusion," beginning next Tuesday, April 2, and running through Sunday, April 6.

"I have been involved in many productions here at USD and I will actually be one of the first to graduate with the new Theatre major, but for some reason this production in particular is a must-see. It answers questions about love, life, vanity and self-deception. I have never seen such discipline and effort put forth in a production.

Director Colleen Kelly has set an incredible standard for theatre to come here at USD," said Assistant Director and Senior, Michael Dondanville II.

"The Illusion" was originally "Illusion Comique," written by 17th century playwright, Pierre Corneille. Although Corneille went on to earn himself the title "the father of French tragedy," "Illusion Comique" is a comedy about a father who visits a sorcerer in hopes of finding his estranged son.

The play was adapted in the late 20th century by American playwright, Tony Kushner.

"The Illusion crosses historical boundaries. One scene may seem like it is set in the 1600s, while the next scene may seem

more modern," said Kelly, director of the production and the Theatre Arts Program. "The play's setting is floating in time and space."

Throughout the play the sorcerer, Alacandre, played by sophomore Joseph Vega, conjures up images that show the son's struggles, loves and finally a secret.

"I'm not a Theatre major, but I've seen this play before and I just had to audition. It's a great story for people who like mysteries and surprise endings," Vega said.

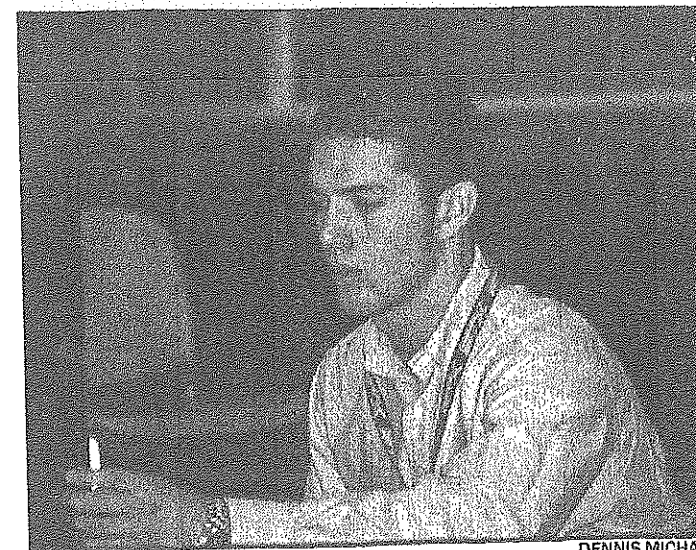
Both Theatre majors and non-majors played a role in this production. The 10-member cast barely scratches the surface of all the work that went into this play.

Set designer Robin Roberts said, "The technical theater class has put about 400 hours into just the building of this set, excluding the design time."

Tickets for "The Illusion" can be purchased in advance at the University Center box office or at Shiley Theatre one hour before the curtain. Prices are \$6 for students and seniors and \$8 for the general public. Come support your fellow classmates.



DENNIS MICHAEL



DENNIS MICHAEL

Bayardo DeMurguia and Celeste Due show off their acting skills while rehearsing a scene (above).

DeMurguia still hard at work reciting lines after the scene has ended (left).

# “The Illusion” receives rave reviews

By Chryssa Tsakiris  
STAFF WRITER

“The Illusion” appeared in Shiley Theater last week. Its cast was made up of USD students who gave exceptional performances.

Chris Bresky, who plays the main character in the play, the son of Pridamant, said “The Illusion,” a part of the up and coming theater program at USD, “is indicative of a program that is going somewhere. I hope it’s a wake up call to the campus and aspiring actors.”

“I have never worked with such a hard working cast. They’re just amazing. Solid, real, down to earth,” Bresky said of his cast mates.

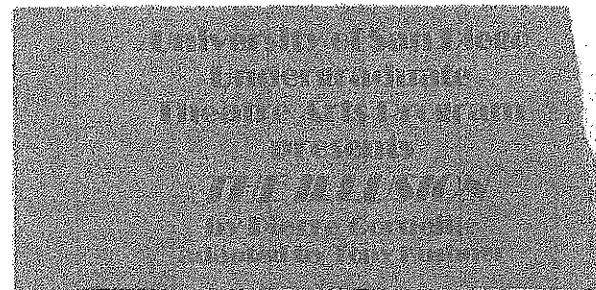
You can see throughout the play how the tight knit cast works so well together: the chemistry and camaraderie shines through, in every single scene. “This cast is solid as a chain,” he said. “Deborah Heinig, who did our vocal training, and Tony Ward are amazing. Colleen Kelly is big time blowin’ up.” He was challenged by Ward’s classes, trained to near perfection with Heinig’s intense vocal trainings, and left literally in awe of Kelly.

The theater program at USD is going places and Bresky feels as though he is getting the training he needs to pursue an acting career. “I feel like I am getting it here,” he said.

Bayardo deMurguia feels “lucky enough to have been

cast” in this “amazing” production. “The Illusion” was deMurguia’s first experience on stage. He plays The Amanuensis, the servant to magician Alcandre, in a realistic way. The movies “Blade 2,” “The Lord of the Rings” and “Harry Potter” were deMurguia’s inspirations for the character, as he slithers across the stage, hunches over submissively to his master and undulates and heaves, thrusting himself into “the other world.”

This first-time actor has a lot to say in regards to his fantastic experience: “We all would feed



off each other, and you realize that the more and more you [act], the more and more you love it. You just get to be yourself and do what you want.”

As for the sound, lighting and costumes, deMurguia says, “We’re being upgraded to professional and it’s going to set the standard. Theater’s going to go up—everything’s cool now.”

Ricky Hauch plays the character of Matamore, a rival to Bresky’s character, who also has traces of lunacy and sheer insanity to him. “I did a lot of character work,” he says playfully. “Endless hours in front of the mirror,” he says, with that glint of sarcasm.

“Kelly deserves a thousand

thanks,” Hauch said, and he spoke respectfully of his mentor, Lucas Rooney. This was Hauch’s first acting experience as well.

“My family came down from Sacramento to see me, and that really meant a lot to me. They told me I was great,” he said.

Daniel Jay Vioria played a convincing steel-hearted turned human being of a father; he is the first character out on stage and the play revolves around his guilt of driving his son away.

Joseph Vega, the magician Alcandre, commanded the play through the bangs of his staff to the stage. His movement and fluidity—through costume design and sheer movement—was, ironically, magical.

The leading lady, Celeste Due, played an endearing, comical and eventually pitiful woman, all exactly how her character should have been.

She knew how to play the audience and her timing was immaculate.

Camelia Poespowwidjojo was an excellent maid. She is the impetus behind so much of the action between Clindor and the maid, who fall in love on numerous occasions.

Sam Cheadle appears only twice in the play and both times you’re left wanting more. He plays a cowardly rival so convincingly well that you can’t help but laugh hysterically at him!

Ali Hashemian plays the pompous Adraste who eventually dies in a sword fight with Clindor (Bresky). He dies gracefully, and though he makes



you despise his character in the play, his death is surprisingly gruesome and shocking.

Lu Louis has a brief cameo as a vengeful prince who stabs and kills the cheating, but charismatic, Theogones.

The play itself fit together so well. We see three different scenes, three different kinds of loves, and in the end it’s all just acting anyway.

Pridamant finds out that not only is his son alive and well,

but he’s an actor in Paris.

The last scene of the play gave me chills: Alcandre give a speech on the illusion but contradictory reality of love: “Love is the sea—the shores are real but how much more compelling is the sea?” He leaves us with beautiful imagery; virtual poetry in motion: “The art of illusion is the art of love, and the art of love is the blood red heat of the world. At times, I think there is nothing else.”